

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

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R 141400Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4745

INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 1416

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PA

SUBJECT: LIBERAL PARTY PLANS TO COUNTER "COMMUNIST THREAT"
IN PARAGUAY

1. THE PRESIDENT OF THE MINISCULE LIBERAL PARTY
(PL) CARLOS LEVI RUFFINELLI CALLED ON THE AMBASSADOR
APRIL 1 TO REPORT HIS PARTY WILL JOIN
FORCES WITH THE EVEN SMALLER DEMOCRATIC LIBERALS
(PLD) AND WITH ASSURANCES OF SUPPORT FROM PRESIDENT
STROESSNER WILL TRY TO USURP THE ROLE OF CHIEF
OPPOSITION PARTY FROM THE RADICAL LIBERALS (PLR).

2. LEVI SAID THE PLR'S NEW LEADERSHIP (DOMINGO LAINO)
IS COMMUNIST. THIS PLUS WHAT HE BELIEVES IS EVIDENCE
THAT ARGENTINA'S ERP IS NOW SUPPORTING PLANS FOR A
WAVE OF COMMUNIST TERROR INSIDE PARAGUAY (PART OF A
WORLDWIDE TREND HE LINKED TO THE COLLAPSE OF
INDOCHINA) HAS CAUSED THE PL AND PLD TO SET ASIDE
THEIR DIFFERENCES TO COMBAT THEIR COMMON ENEMY --
COMMUNISM. HE SAID THE UNIFIED LIBERALS ARE A
GENUINE OPPOSITION PARTY WHO DEPLORE STROESSNER'S
ONE-MAN RULE; BUT THEY PREFER PATRIOT STROESSNER
TO THE ALIEN IDEOLOGY NOW ESPOUSED BY THE LIBERAL
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RADICALS, AND THEREFORE SHOULD BY RIGHTS BECOME THE
CHIEF LEGAL OPPOSITION PARTY.

3. LEVI SAID HE HAS OBTAINED STROESSNER'S ENDORSEMENT DURING THE RECENT (MUCH PUBLICIZED) MEETING AT THE PALACE, AND WOUND UP HIS PRESENTATION SAYING HE HAD BEEN AUTHORIZED BY THE PL AND PLD TO ASK THE EMBASSY TO HELP UNDERWRITE THE ANTI-COMMUNIST/ANTI-PLR CAMPAIGN.

4. AMBASSADOR AND EMBOFFS EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THIS INFORMATION BUT GAVE LEVI NO ENCOURAGEMENT THAT THE EMBASSY WOULD LEND HIM ANY SUPPORT.

5. COMMENT: LEVI'S PLAN TO GO AFTER THE RADICALS SOUNDS LIKE A STROESSNER PLOY TO RID HIMSELF OF THE LEFT-LEANING PLR OPPOSITION PARTY, OR AT LEAST DECREASE ITS STRENGTH. STROESSNER HAS LONG LUSTED AFTER A DOCILE AND ANTI-COMMUNIST "LOYAL OPPOSITION" AND BOTH HE AND LEVI STAND TO GAIN BY A MANEUVER WHICH WOULD WEAKEN THE PLR. SINCE THIS IS A CASE OF STRICTLY INTERNAL POLITICAL SCHEMING, NEITHER THE EMBASSY NOR THE USG SHOULD IN ANY WAY GET INVOLVED.
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